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some revolution, the house of commons should in a momentary fit of enthusiasm pass some radical or socialistic legislation which might threaten the rights of the land owners, the house of lords stands firmly and securely in place to prevent any such injustice or spoliation. But that some effort should be made to secure for the community the future increment of value in urban lands is being more and more keenly felt in England, not only by labor men and socialists, but by many of the staid and respectable tradesmen, merchants, manufacturers and professional men who make up the English borough councils; and it may well seem that Professor Dewsnap brushes aside too hastily and cavalierly the strong movement that took bodily shape in parliament during the session of 1907 in the land values bill.

Whether or not the reader agrees with Professor Dewsnap in the conclusions he draws from his data, every student of economics must be grateful to him for the accuracy and care which have gone into the collection and arrangement of his material. Overcrowding is not yet the problem in American cities that it is in Great Britain; but in New York and in the cities that are following its example in the erection of great blocks of tenements the question of overhousing, as distinct from overcrowding, bids fair to become a much greater problem than it has ever been in the worst London or Glasgow slums, and a study of the question in England might suggest many considerations to those who have at heart the welfare and the future of our great cities.

A. G. P.

The Sanitary Evolution of London. By HENRY JEPHSON, L.C.C.
(Brooklyn: A. Wessels Company. 1907. Pp. 440.)

Fifteen years ago Mr. Henry Jephson wrote *the Platform: Its Rise and Progress in England*. It carried him into a new and untrodden field, and he produced a book which at once took rank among the standard monographs on English constitutional development. Its usefulness and its immediate acceptance as a standard work warranted the expectation of other monographs on constitutional history from Mr. Jephson's pen. But within a few years after his *History of the Platform* appeared, Mr. Jephson became immersed in London municipal politics, and until his monograph on the *Sanitary Evolution of London* was published at the end of 1907, his public activities were confined to his membership of the London county council. Obviously it is his close and practical interest in the municipal problems of London that suggested his second

monograph; and it is exceedingly fortunate for the permanent literature of municipal government and of sanitary science the world over that when Mr. Jephson realized that there was a need for a book on the sanitary evolution of the British metropolis, he set himself the task of meeting this need.

It goes without saying that Mr. Jephson's new work is at once scholarly and authoritative. Most of it is based on first-hand authorities—chiefly on the reports of the medical officers of health of the city of London and of the forty-odd vestries or local boards of works by which the metropolitan area outside the boundaries of the ancient city were governed until 1899, when London government was at last placed upon the same democratic basis as municipal government in provincial England. It is scarcely possible, however, to congratulate Mr. Jephson on having marshaled the material that resulted from his careful research as well or as successfully as he marshaled his data when he wrote the *History of the Platform*. His plan of tracing the sanitary evolution of London decade by decade has apparently hampered his freedom; and to some careful and appreciative students of his work it would seem that better results from the point of view of the readableness of the book might have been secured by arranging the material according to subject as, for instance, drainage, overcrowding, the growth and organization of London's corps of sanitary inspectors, the purification of the Thames water supply, the provision of hospitals for infectious diseases, and the enactment and administration of laws for the prevention of adulteration of food. All these subjects, and many more of equal interest appertaining to the housekeeping of London, are exhaustively and illuminatingly dealt with by Mr. Jephson on the decennial plan. The plan admits perhaps of measurement of progress by decades; but even if it be accepted as the best method of presenting the data, it may be suggested that the introduction of a few headlines to the sections of the chapters would have made easier reading, and added to the strength of the appeal that the book must undoubtedly make to all who are interested in the development of local government and in municipal and sanitary science.

To Mr. Jephson—to any Englishman in fact—the task of tracing out the sanitary evolution of London cannot have been pleasant. The history of this evolution, as now written, forms the most tremendous indictment that was ever laid against the British parliament of the period when only sections of the people were directly represented in the house of commons. Parliament in those days only bestirred itself for the gov-

ernment of London and for the care of the health and physical well-being of its teeming population after an epidemic of cholera or smallpox had swept away thousands of people. Thensome legislation was enacted with a view to improving the sanitary condition of London and safeguarding to some degree the health of its inhabitants. But most of this legislation was permissive in its character. It was left to the vestries to put it into force or not as they pleased; and as most of these vestries were dominated by men who kept public houses or jobbed and traded in unsanitary property, much of the legislation became inoperative and might just as well never have been put on the statute book. Vested interests in disease and death dominated most of the forty-odd unrepresentative local governing authorities of the metropolis. Parliament was either afraid of these vested interests or indifferent to what was going on around it in the great community in the midst of which it assembled every year for its sessions; and except for the creation of the metropolitan board of works in 1855—the board which took in hand the main drainage works and other large London improvements—there was no well-marked sanitary improvement in the metropolis until after 1888, when the London county council, a body elected by the voters at large, superseded a central governing body which had been composed of representatives of the vestries, which for a century had failed in the work which unheeding governments and equally unheeding parliaments had left in their utterly incompetent hands.

Generally speaking, it may be said that most of the improvements in London conditions which Mr. Jephson is able to record in his later chapters came after the wide extension of the parliamentary franchise in 1884–1885. What have been described as the great governing families of England dominated cabinets and administrations at Whitehall during most of the period of which Mr. Jephson writes. His book is as much an indictment of these great governing families as it is of parliament. It cannot be said in extenuation of the attitude of the governing classes of this period towards London that they were not able to inform themselves of actual conditions. Mr. Jephson quotes from hundreds of reports of medical officers of health which were available for the use of the government if they were not actually on file in the state departments at Whitehall. But governments and parliament only bestirred themselves when cholera was moving westward on London or when smallpox was carrying off its victims at the rate of 5000 a year; and the result of all this long indifference and neglect or of half-hearted effort at best is told in Mr. Jephson's pages. It is sad reading, for it is

the story of the fate of people who were mowed down by tens of thousands, and who were for the most part utterly helpless. English people are supposed to have a genius of self-government. This genius was never manifest in the government of the metropolis until the last decade of the nineteenth century; chiefly because London was denied opportunities for self-government which were granted to the large towns of the provinces as early as 1835, and because parliament and the government never gave the people of London an effective lead. Mr. Jephson's book is not one which adds to the credit or the reputation of British parliamentary and governmental institutions. It is rather one which tends to subdue the pride of the English in their institutions and their efficiency—at least so far as these institutions existed until fifteen or twenty years ago. None the less the sanitary evolution of London, as traced by Mr. Jephson, has lessons of the greatest value for every country confronted by the municipal problems that are inherent to the growth and development of large cities.

EDWARD PORRITT.

The Spirit of Parliament. By DUNCAN SCHWANN, M.P. (London: Alston Rivers. Pp. ix, 201.)

Mr. Duncan Schwann is a young liberal member of parliament—not yet thirty years of age. He was elected to the house of commons for the first time in January, 1906, when he stood for the Hyde Division of Cheshire, and converted a conservative majority of 569, in 1900, into a minority of 1063, in the great electoral overturn of January, 1906. Young as he is, and new to his parliamentary duties, he has had peculiar opportunities of becoming acquainted with political life and traditions. His father has sat since 1886 for North Manchester, and in the parliament of 1900 he was the only liberal among the nine members who represent the twin cities of Manchester and Salford. Mr. Schwann, senior, is one of the most active of Manchester liberals, and from his earliest childhood Mr. Duncan Schwann grew up in an atmosphere of political activity and of genuine and earnest liberal convictions. *The Spirit of Parliament* is instinct with this political atmosphere. The little volume is exactly what its title implies. It is in no way a manual of parliamentary life. It contains neither facts nor statistics; but it does give better than any book previously in existence, a realization of parliament from the inside—the spirit that pervades and vivifies the forms and procedure of the house of commons. Mr. Schwann is convinced that the